IMRF Grant Report:
Psychometric Meta-analysis of the Counselor Burnout Inventory

Principal Investigator:
Gerta Bardhoshi, Ph.D., NCC, CSC, LPC, ACS
Assistant Professor
College of Education
Department of Rehabilitation and Counselor Education
N352 Lindquist Center
319-335-5942
gerta-bardhoshi@uiowa.edu
Introduction

The purpose of this IMRF-funded project was to conduct a psychometric review and synthesis of the Counselor Burnout Inventory (CBI).

The CBI is the first scale specifically developed to measure burnout symptoms in professional counselors. In addition to focusing exclusively on counselors, another unique contribution of this free-access instrument is that it measures burnout across five dimensions (Lee et al., 2007). Although the widely-used Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI, Maslach & Jackson, 1981a) assesses burnout as an individual syndrome in human services professionals employed in a wide range of occupations by specifically assessing the three core dimensions of burnout (i.e., emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment), the CBI adds two domain-specific dimensions that are conceptualized to be essential in understanding counselors’ overall experience of burnout: professional counselors’ negative work environment and deterioration in personal lives. These additional dimensions help examine both the impact that organizational factors can have on the syndrome of burnout and the often-devastating personal effects for counselors experiencing burnout, with important implications for counselor burnout screening and targeted intervention.

More than a dozen studies of varying psychometric methodologies, samples, and quality have examined the psychometric properties of the CBI, but this IMRF-funded study is the first systematic review of available psychometric evidence. The psychometric CBI literature has now matured to the point that multiple studies of score reliability and validity can be synthesized to inform recommendations about the CBI’s use in clinical and research settings, and to evaluate the CBI’s potential value in assessing burnout in a diverse population of professional counselors. Beyond determining the extent to which the psychometric properties of the CBI have been evaluated for use with counselors, the PI also sought to expand the existing psychometric evidence regarding the CBI specifically with school counselors. Thus, the PI initiated a large sample (n = 1005) study to gather additional data regarding the psychometric characteristics of this instrument with school counselors working in K-12 schools. To date, this is the largest sample of counselors assessed using the CBI, and the resultant data was then included in the psychometric synthesis to bolster combinatorial analyses.

Results

This conducted study has two main components and purposes. First, a large sample study of the CBI was undertaken (n = 1005) to study the psychometric characteristics of this instrument with professional school counselors working in K-12 schools. Using data form this sample, we intended to answer the following research questions: a) What is the internal consistency of the CBI scores with a large national sample of professional school counselors?; b) How well do the suggested one factor and five factor CBI models fit the data from a large sample of professional school counselors?; c) How substantially do CBI scores correlate with theoretically related measures assessing school counselor self-
efficacy, perceived organizational support, principal support, and job satisfaction?; and d) What are the resultant sample estimates of mean and standard deviation.

Second, we conducted a comprehensive synthesis of published psychometric evidence related to the CBI to provide aggregated answers to the following important questions: (a) What is the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of CBI scores for professional counselor participants?; (b) How substantially do CBI scores correlate with criterion measures?; (c) What is known about the factor structure of the CBI?; (d) What is the overall average level of burnout among the professional counselor population?; and, finally, (e) What empirical findings have emerged that help inform counselor practitioners, educators, supervisors, and researchers who may use the CBI? We included results from our original, large sample psychometric study in this summary of psychometric evidence to highlight how the CBI performs under normal circumstances across cumulative studies, as well as and explore implications of interpretations in using the CBI with professional counselors. No study to date has attempted an omnibus psychometric analysis and synthesis of this type on the CBI.

The PI led a research team who reviewed all available published and dissertation studies of the CBI internal consistency, test-retest reliability, external (convergent) validity with other burnout instruments, internal (exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) validity, and average responses since its publication in 2007. Inclusion criteria applied to 12 studies using the Counselor Burnout Inventory (CBI), including results from a large sample ($n = 1,005$) original study conducted by the PI to evaluate the psychometric characteristics of this instrument with practicing professional school counselors. Aggregated internal consistency ($\alpha$) was .90 ($n = 1,708$) with subscale $\alpha$s ranging from .73-.86 ($n = 2,809$). Test-retest reliability ($r_{tt}$; $n = 18$; $j = 1$) was .81 with subscale $r_{tt}$s ranging from .72-.85. Convergent comparisons were robust across ten instruments. Structural validity indicated a 5-factor solution, and an adequate to good fit of the model to the current study’s data. For those interested in norm-referenced interpretation of the CBI, $T$ score and percentile rank transformations were also generated on these aggregated sample results.

**Specific Work Products**

- **Bardhoshi, G., Erford, B. T., & Jang, H.** (under review, minor revision). Psychometric Synthesis of the Counselor Burnout Inventory. *Journal of Counseling and Development*
References
